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WEM URBAN DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1946

NORTH-WEST SHROPSHIRE HEALTH DISTRICTS.

With the Compliments of
The Medical Officer of Health.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
6, SALOP ROAD,
OSWESTRY.

TELEPHONE 388

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WEM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1946

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for 1946. The Minister of Health has directed that the report be prepared on the lines of that for 1945 so it will not assume its pre-war comprehensiveness.

The report includes notes by the Sanitary Inspector on matters with which he is more particularly concerned; for his co-operation and help during the year I wish to express my thanks.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

L. WILSON EVANS.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office Held.	Whole or Part Time.
L. Wilson Evans	M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.
F. Morcom	M.I.S.E., C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.	Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.	Whole.

Extracts from vital statistics for the year 1946.

Estimated population 2121

Births

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	17	17	34
Illegitimate	2	1	3
Total	19	18	37

Birth Rate per 1000 population 17.4
Birth Rate per 1000 population Wem Rural District..... 18.2
Birth Rate per 1000 population England and Wales..... 19.1

Still Births

	M.	F.
Legitimate	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-
Total	-	1

Still Birth Rate per 1000 population..... 0.47
Still Birth Rate per 1000 population Wem Rural District..... 0.69
Still Birth Rate per 1000 population England and Wales..... 0.53

Deaths of infants under 1 year of age

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Total	2	2	4

Infant mortality rate, i.e. number of deaths of infants under 1 year of age per 1000 births 103
Infant mortality rate Wem Rural District 43
Infant mortality rate England and Wales..... 43

Number of deaths

M.	F.	Total.
26	16	42

Death Rate per 1000 population..... 19.8
Death Rate per 1000 population Wem Rural District..... 11.9
Death Rate per 1000 population England and Wales..... 11.5

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH.

	M.	F.
Heart Disease	8	4
Cancer	5	3
Digestive Diseases	2	2
Bronchitis and other respiratory diseases	2	1
Intracranial vascular lesions	1	1
Pneumonia	1	-
Nephritis	1	-
Unclassified causes	3	4
Suicide and other violence	2	-

There was an estimated reduction in the population of 75 and with the number of deaths exceeding the births by 5 there was a corresponding natural decrease. The births though fewer than in recent years are still at a fairly high figure. There is a large increase in the deaths, 42 compared with 29 last year. This is largely due to the number of deaths from Cancer. There were eight this year and none in 1945; that was abnormal and this year's figures are above the average. Another adverse figure is that for infant mortality which is at the high figure of 103, but the total figures are small and small differences made wide variations in the rate, actually four babies died as compared with two last year. To somewhat offset this it is satisfactory to record that for the sixth successive year no mothers died as a result of childbirth, and again this year there were no deaths from Tuberculosis.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Notification of Infectious Disease.

Ages.	Measles.		Pneumonia.		Whooping Cough.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-1	1	-	-	-	1	-
1-3	1	2	-	-	-	-
3-5	1	3	-	-	-	1
5-10	3	3	1	-	-	1
10-15	-	-	1	-	-	-
15-25	-	-	-	-	-	-

Infectious Disease table continued.

Ages.	Measles.		Pneumonia.		Whooping Cough.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
25-45	1	-	-	1	-	-
45-65	-	-	1	1	-	-
65 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	7	8	3	2	1	2

There was also one case of Scarlet Fever in a boy of 16 years, and one of Sonne Dysentery in a boy of 5 years. There was one case of Diphtheria in an adult who evidently contracted it before coming to the Town.

The cases of Measles were distributed during the year as follows:-

	June.	July.	August.	September.
No. of cases	4	4	6	1

The five cases of Pneumonia occurred in November and December.

There was one case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum notified.

It was a satisfactory year as far as infectious disease was concerned. The Measles did not spread to any great extent and was a mild form. There were no deaths from Measles or Whooping Cough. Pneumonia caused 1 death.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

	Under 5 yrs.	5-15 yrs.
No. of children who received the complete course during the year.	36	1
Percentage of child population considered to be immunised at December 31st, 1946.	76%	99%
No. of children who received a reinforcing dose.	-	24.

The considerable increase in the percentage of children immunised is accounted for very largely by the reduction in the child population as estimated by the Registrar General. There were nearly a quarter less children in 1946 than in 1945, and with the number immunised about the same the percentage is considerably higher, but still the figures can be considered satisfactory and are higher than those for the County as a whole.

SCABIES.

Only four cases of Scabies came to the notice of the Health Department during the year, all in one family. The cases were adults, two children in the house were not infected. The cases cleared up under treatment.

TUBERCULOSIS.

	Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
New cases	-	-	-	1
Cases transferred from other districts	-	1	-	-
Deaths	Nil.		Nil.	

Number of cases on the Register at the end of 1946.

Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
M.	F.	M.	F.
5	2	5	5

There were no cases of Respiratory Tuberculosis notified during the year and no deaths were recorded. It is satisfactory to record that the incidence of the disease is low.

WATER.

The water is not chlorinated nor treated in any way before entering the mains. The following are reports of the Bacteriological examinations taken during the year.

May 1946 Bacilli Coli absent in 100 mls.

December 1946 (1) Presumptive B.Coli 11 in 100 mls.

(2) Presumptive B.Coli 25 in 100 mls.

(3) Presumptive B. Coli 7 in 100 mls.

These samples suggested that some surface water was getting into the well, and examination by the Surveyor showed that there was some defect of the joints between some of the bricks and it is anticipated that when this is remedied the quality of the water will improve.

Total number of houses		658
The number of dwelling houses supplied from the public mains		
(a) direct to the houses	606	
(b) by means of stand pipes	50	
Estimated population		2121.
The number of population supplied from the public mains		
(a) Direct to the houses		1970
(b) By means of standpipes		150

Drainage and Sewerage.

624 houses are connected to the sewer by 226 of these have pail closets, only the slop water going into the sewer. This is 65 less than last year so that the scheme adopted by the Council in accordance with Section 46 of the Public Health Act by which owners of properties are invited to submit proposals for the conversion to water closets when the Council would consider making a grant not exceeding 50% of the cost, has borne some fruit, but progress towards attainment of a very desirable improvement to the amenities of about one third of the houses in the Town

is slow, but such is the order of the day, and those owners, and I understand there are quite a few, who wish to take advantage of a chance to improve their property and at the same time the comfort and convenience of the occupiers must await their turn for the contractors to find the time, labour and materials for the job, but one would certainly like to see a more rapid progress towards the cessation of a method of sewage disposal which is even beginning to be tackled in Rural Areas.

BATHS.

In regard to the amenities in the Town the need for the provision of public baths was a matter which I brought before the Council in 1945. It was then no doubt rightly felt that the erection of new houses must receive first consideration, but the very few houses in the Town which have baths or adequate provision for bathing and the unlikelihood of the erection of new houses meeting the situation to any great extent gives importance to a definite need, and as the time when the completion of the housing programme approaches it is hoped that a provision which would greatly add to the comfort and pleasantness of the lives of many of the inhabitants will be kept in mind.

HOUSING.

Three cases of overcrowding were dealt with during the year. One case was allocated a Council House which became vacant. The second family found other accommodation. The third one is an applicant for a Council House.

It is to be hoped that in the near future some time will be available for the inspection of houses in the Town. This lapsed of necessity during the war years and has not yet been revived, the time of the Sanitary Inspector being taken up with other duties, but to ensure that houses are maintained in a reasonable state of fitness and to prevent deterioration some time should be allotted to this important public health work.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

WATER.

No. of houses with direct supply	606	
No. of houses supplied from stand pipe	50	656
Estimated population supplied direct from mains		2121
Estimated population supplied from stand pipes		175

During the year one house was connected to the mains.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

No alteration was made to the sewers.

The number of premises at which pail closets have been converted under the Council scheme of paying 50% of the approved cost is 40. The number of premises (including factories etc.) from which night soil is collected is now 226.

FACTORIES ACT.

Water closets were provided in two factories where there was no proper sanitary accommodation.

INFESTATION.

No complaint was received regarding bugs. The very small number of complaints about rats were passed on to the County Council the authority for the purpose of the Rats and Mice

Destruction Act.

MEAT INSPECTION.

There is no slaughterhouse or knackers yard in use in the District. A number of visits were made to the Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse at Whitchurch on days when meat for this District was being slaughtered.

MILK.

No. of registered producers	16.
No. of accredited producers	Nil.
No. of T.T.producers	Nil.
No. of registered retailers	6
No. of accredited retailers	Nil.
No. of T.T. retailers	Nil.
No. of cowsheds inspections	19.

In general the conditions in the cowsheds and the methods of production were satisfactory. Eight samples of milk were taken from retailers of which 3 were found to be satisfactory and 5 not satisfactory. One not satisfactory was from milk produced in the district. The cowshed was visited and the producer spoken to and the next sample was found to be satisfactory.

ICE CREAM.

A sample of ice cream manufactured in this district was taken by an authority outside the district and was found not to be satisfactory. The premises were visited and the occupier made certain improvements. A written warning was sent and as the time was near the end of the season the occupier stopped making ice-cream for the time.